

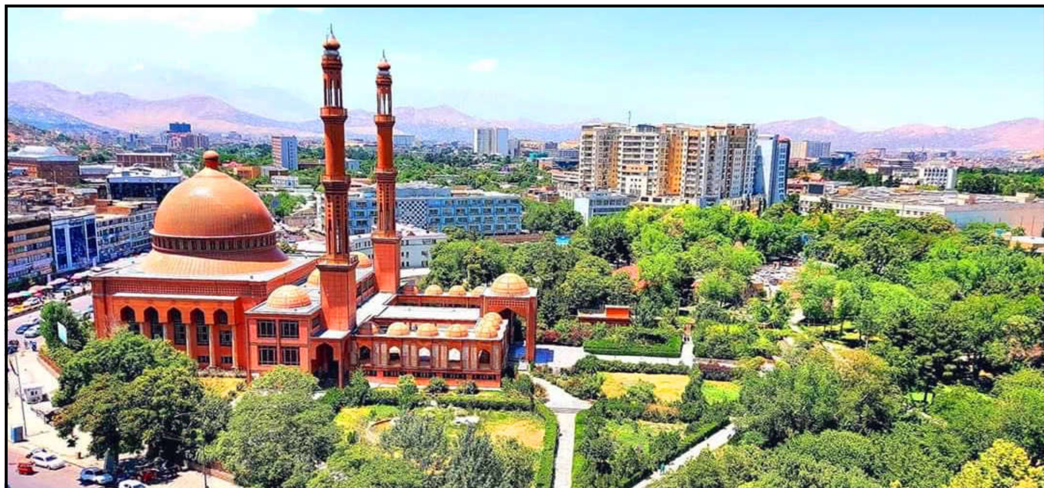
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THE KABUL TIMES

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Leader exempts electricity costs for mosques nationwide



KABUL: The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Shaikh Mullah Hebatullah Akhundzada, in a decree on Wednesday, exempted the country's mosques from paying electricity bills.

Zabihullah Mujahid, the IEA's spokesman, said in a statement on his X page Wednesday that the degree urged the Emirati institutions not to ask mosques to pay for electricity and ordered the relevant institutions to monitor mosques to prevent misuse of electricity.

Previously, the leadership of the Islamic Emirate had ordered that mosques should be built along the country's highways to provide facilities for passengers.

Currently, construction work on a number of mosques has been completed and others are on the verge of completion.

The Kabul Times

Committee approves proposal for construction of commercial market in Balkh

KABUL: The meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Investment Committee was held, approving a proposal for the construction of a commercial market in Balkh province, the office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs said in a statement Wednesday.



According to the statement, two proposals were presented for discussion: one regarding the construction of a commercial market by the private sector on land belonging to the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs in Balkh province, and another concerning the liquefied gas industry.

Following a comprehensive discussion, the proposal for constructing a commercial market on the land of the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs in Balkh province was approved and referred to the Economic Commission for the final decision, the statement added.

Additionally, regarding the proposal for the liquefied gas industry presented by Iranian investors, a designated committee was assigned to conduct technical discussions with the proposing company and submit its report to the Inter-Ministerial Investment Committee within the specified time.

The Kabul Times

Township to be constructed for returnees in Uruzgan



KABUL: The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations said the other day in a statement that a township will be constructed for returnees in the country's southern province of Uruzgan.

The township with 1,083 parcels, will be constructed on 1,826 acres of land in Tarinkot, the capital of the province, providing returnees with shelters, the statement said,

Following the mass deportation of Afghan migrants by the neighboring countries, the leader of the Islamic Emirate has established many committees to manage returnees and provide them with necessary facilities and services in the country. **The Kabul Times**

Industrial, agricultural complexes should be built around Qush Tepa canal, minister

KABUL: Mawlavi Ataullah Omari, the acting Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock said Wednesday that industrial, agricultural, and livestock centers and complexes should be built around the Qush Tepa canal.

Mawlavi Omari made the remarks during the unveiling of a development plan for the Qush Tepa Canal surrounding lands, the ministry said in a statement.

The plan was jointly developed by the ministry and relevant bodies, focusing on the judicious utilization of the lands adjacent to the canal, the statement said.

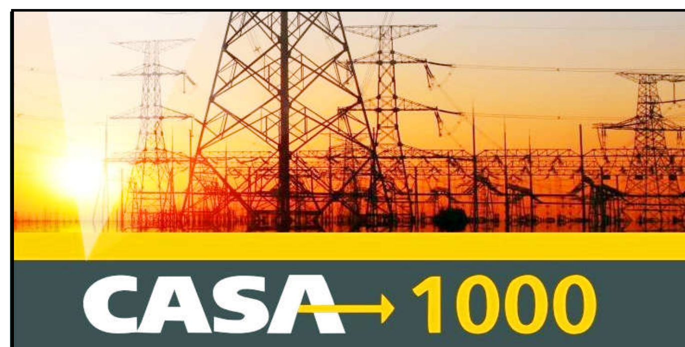
Highlighting the necessity of utilizing the lands surrounding the Qush Tepa Canal efficiently following its construction, Omari stressed the potential for establishing agricultural, livestock, and industrial hubs in these areas, assigning a pivotal role to the private sector and potential investors.

Comprising five segments and 91 points, the plan encompasses the establishment of industrial zones, land reformation, sustainable management practices, canal monitoring and upkeep, product distribution to markets, and facilitation for investors. **The Kabul Times**



IEA committed to completion of CASA-1000 power project, Mujahid

KABUL: Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesperson for the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), said the other day that the IEA has been committed to resuming the CASA-1000 power project and completing it swiftly.



After political changes in Afghanistan, the work of the CASA-1000 power project was suspended, Mujahid said, adding that the project's survey is currently underway with the financial support of the World Bank.

This comes as Tajikistan's Energy Ministry announced that the CASA-1000 international electricity transmission project, which will connect Central Asia to South Asia, will be fully operational by 2027.

Tajik Energy Minister, Daler Juma, emphasized that construction work in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan has been completed, while Pakistan is rapidly advancing its infrastructure.

However, in Afghanistan, after a two-year delay, the project resumed in May 2024 with World Bank funding and is slated for completion next year.

The CASA-1000 project was officially launched in May 2016 to transmit electricity from Central Asia to South Asia.

The Islamic Emirate's Ministry of Energy and Water reported that 70 percent of the project's work is complete, with 95 percent of its equipment already delivered.

With the project completion, the regional countries will benefit from shared energy resources, reducing reliance on unpredictable energy sources.

The project is being implemented with investments and financial support from institutions such as the World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and European Investment Bank (EIB).

The Kabul Times

Osmani urges UNDP to ensure transparency, quality in projects



KABUL: The Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Mawlavi Sadar Azam Osmani, in a meeting with Deville, the head of the United Nations Development Programme in Afghanistan, urged UNDP to ensure transparency, efficiency, and quality in the implementation of their projects in the country, according to a statement from the ministry the other day.

Both sides focused on the progress of several development programs, including check dam projects in Takhta Pul district of Kandahar, Hesarak district of Nangarhar, and the construction of greenhouses in multiple provinces, the statement said.

Osmani emphasized the need for close coordination between UNDP and the Afghan government, stressing that all development efforts should adhere to principles of transparency, efficiency, and quality.

The UNDP representative shared a report about the program's projects, including the Takhta Pul check dam, noting that 70% of the work had been completed.

UNDP has been working across Afghanistan for more than 50 years, addressing challenges and supporting Afghan citizens' aspirations for peace, prosperity and sustainability.

Its work is guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity in the country.

The Kabul Times

Over 6 tons of drugs seized in Takhar



KABUL: Abdul Matin Qani, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, said the other day that 6.3 tons of drugs have been seized in Takhar province.

"During a series of counter-narcotics operations by the anti-drugs police personnel, 6,299 kilograms of opium have been confiscated in the Khatayan area near Taloqan city the provincial capital of Takhar," Qani said.

The narcotics were skillfully placed in a gas tanker, he further said, adding that two individuals have been arrested in connection with the incident and will undergo initial investigations before being transferred to the judicial authorities. It should be said that after the reestablishment of the Islamic Emirate, a significant and unprecedented campaign has been started against drug cultivation and trafficking, as drug cultivation, acquisition, and distribution have now plummeted to their lowest levels across the country.

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International-Daily
WWW.TheKabulTimes.com
Uzair Baryalay, Director of Govt. Dailies
Email: Atvaishan@gmail.com
Editor-in-Chief, Nik Mohammad Nikmal
Email: Nikmal@TheKabulTimes.com
Mob: (+93)700 208 103
Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Fathulbari Akhgar
Mob: (+93)748 076 223
Distribution: 0202 312 509-(+93)766 044 966)
Graphic designers: Baktash Shiabani, Ali and Habibullah Aiman
Translators: Abdul Baqi Haqyar, Noor Ahmad and Hamid Jhwok
Cartoonist: Sayed Hassan Samedi
Address: 8th PD, Olympic Square, East of Chaman-e-Huzori, Kabul, Afghanistan

Food for thought

Today's generation guarantees our bright future

Border clashes severely affect civilians in Torkham border

A large number of families have been reportedly displaced as clashes intensified between Afghan-Pak border forces along the Torkham border areas.

Gunfire from the neighboring Pakistani militaries has damaged many houses and displaced tens of fasting families from their residences. According to some reports, the conflict resumed after hours of lull along the border, with more civilians leaving their houses. Exact reports said that forces from the neighboring country indiscriminately and intentionally targeted civilian houses and shops.

Unfortunately, the Torkham crossing has remained closed to all traffic for the past eleven days, leaving thousands of cargo trucks and hundreds of travelers, including critically ill patients, stranded on both sides of the Durand Line. However, the Islamic Emirate's related organs have started surveying the displaced people to provide them with assistance.

This is not the first time the crossing has been closed to all communications, including trade and transit, this happened repeatedly. A few months ago, Pakistani fighter jets threw bombs on civilians' houses in some of Afghanistan's southern provinces, leaving tens of civilians, including women and children, dead and causing the displacement of hundreds of families.

Following the recent clashes, Pakistani border forces closed the crossing as they failed to resist the Islamic Emirate troops and lost battles against the brave Afghan forces.

Only innocent civilians pay the price of illegitimate and imposed wars. They have to grab their children and flee their houses to save their lives whenever the clashes start. The country's traders have also lost tens of thousands of dollars, and the people are now suffering from the rise of the prices, notably primary food items, during the holy month of Ramadan.

The challenge comes at a time when the holy month of Ramadan and the ongoing harsh winter are adding to the needy people's problems in the conflicted areas.

The main reason, according to local sources, was the plan of the country's security forces to establish checkposts in areas along the two countries' shared borders, which is the Islamic Emirate's legitimate right. The forces of the country can erect outposts wherever they wanted in their borders and no one has the right to prevent them.

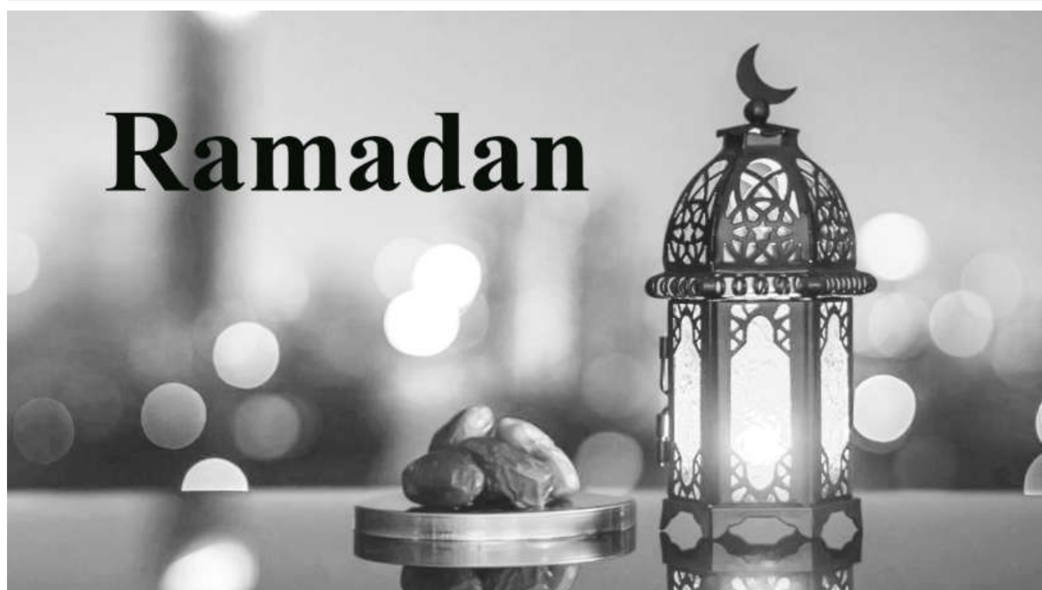
As frequently said, the two countries' defense and security institutions should establish a joint commission to permanently solve all problems, including trade, transit, and border issues, instead of fueling wars and conflicts, killing innocents, and displacing locals.

The commission should be membered with honest, just and loyal to both nations' interests and work hard for bringing lasting security stability along the shared borders and help the two countries traders and travelers' peaceful affairs.

Key responsibilities of the government in Ramadan

Part III

A proper replacement should be introduced for these harmful ideologies and traditions, ensuring that society is filled with Islamic principles and religious traditions.



As mentioned in the previous parts of this article, the blessed month of Ramadan is a time of immense virtues and blessings.

During this month, spirituality reaches its peak in society, and the government has a duty to welcome and safeguard this sacred atmosphere.

This holy month presents the best opportunity for the government to take steps in promoting and implementing Islamic laws and principles.

Over the past twenty years of republican rule and the presence of colonial institutions, Afghan society has become intertwined with non-Islamic ideologies and concepts.

Unfortunately, due to a lack of awareness, people have perceived these ideologies as "freedom" and have developed sentiments toward them. Ramadan provides an excellent opportunity to combat this dark legacy and replace it with Islamic values and principles.

On one hand, the spirituality of Ramadan, and on the other, the heightened emotions of the people during this month, facilitate the replacement of colonial-era ideologies with the laws, rules, values, and principles of Islam.

The state, through its institutions and ministries such as the Ministry of Information and Culture, the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs, as well as the Supreme Court, must first identify these false ideologies and harmful customs.

It should determine which regions and provinces are affected by non-Islamic thoughts and undesirable traditions.

The state must investigate the root causes of these issues and understand why people have become attached to them.

Furthermore, it should analyze whose interests—whether institutions, groups, or organizations—are served by the presence of these ideologies and traditions.

After identifying these aspects, these government bodies must devise ways to combat such ideologies and implement solutions wisely and effectively.

A proper replacement should be introduced for these harmful ideologies and traditions, ensuring that society is filled with Islamic principles and religious traditions.

Experience has shown that when a custom disappears without a proper alternative, people become restless and turn to another undesirable tradition.

One of the main challenges in contemporary Islamic societies is the diminished presence of fundamental Islamic concepts.

Concepts such as rizq (provision), ajal (predestined time of death), sabr (patience), qana'at (contentment), ita'at (obedience), the test of life, the belief that good and evil are determined by Allah alone, the temporary nature of worldly life, and the eternal nature of Paradise for believers have all faded among people.

Either these concepts no longer exist in people's understanding, or they have turned into mere slogans, repeated on lips but not guiding people's actions in daily life.

Ramadan is the best opportunity for government institutions, in collaboration with the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs and respected scholars, to spread these concepts among the public and remind people of their significance.

Without these fundamental Islamic concepts, the implementation of Islam among the people would become forceful and could lead to dissatisfaction.

These principles help people willingly accept Islamic laws and view them as the means to success in both this world and the Hereafter.

During Ramadan, scholars should actively preach these values, and beyond that, the Ministries of Education and Higher Education must ensure their inclusion in the curricula of religious schools, regular schools, institutes, and universities.

The next generation should internalize these values academically and carry them in their hearts.

Misguided concepts such as gender (as defined in Western discourse), unrestricted freedom, modernity, globalization, and the imitation of Western lifestyles, along with harmful traditions such as giving girls away in forced marriage to settle disputes, the violation of women's Islamic rights—including their right to choose a spouse and inherit property—and excessive expenditures on ceremonies that make marriage difficult, must be identified and addressed by the relevant authorities.

The fight against both Western ideologies and pre-Islamic traditions must be strategic and guided by expert consultations, scholarly input, and research institutions.

This ensures that the efforts are purposeful and that, alongside uprooting harmful traditions, they are replaced with Islamic ideas and customs. Without a doubt, this month is a month of mercy, and there is no greater form of mercy than the widespread promotion of Islamic values and traditions.

Firooz Ahmad Ebrahimi



The Gaza crisis: How long the international community will remain silent



The Gaza war, in which the Zionist occupiers have been shedding the blood of innocent Palestinian people for the past 15 months, still has not ended, and there is no sign of progress in addressing the crisis there.

It was expected that a second round of talks would begin to end the war and finally end this bloody conflict, but Israeli officials presented a new plan.

According to this plan, Israeli prisoners should be released in exchange for a 50-day ceasefire.

Hamas rejected this proposal because it was just another part of Israel's colonial strategy, which wanted to control the war according to its desired scenario, not for real peace.

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza is worsening with each passing day.

The Zionist occupiers have imposed a ban on the delivery of food to the innocent Palestinian people.

This ban comes as the holy month of Ramadan is ongoing.

The World Health Organization, human rights organizations, and international institutions must raise their voices, as imposing a ban on the delivery of food and assistance to people is a clear violation of their rights.

The Zionist regime is making various excuses to justify the war, but the truth is that their brutal aggression is only to destroy Gaza and kill the Palestinians.

Meanwhile, international human rights organizations and Western powers are only watching indifferently.

This silence gives Israel the courage to continue the atrocities.

If the international community really claims to have human values, why has it not taken practical action to save the oppressed people of Gaza?

Israel is threatening to prolong and expand the war in Gaza.

The Israel's continued threat to expand the war in the Palestinians' territory is not only dangerous for the people of Palestine, but also poses a grave threat to the security of the entire region.

If the war continues, it will lead to the involvement of other countries, the escalation of the conflict, and increased instability.

The Palestinians, who have been sacrificing for their rights for decades, are not victims of a catastrophe imposed by the international community and Israeli regime, but rather citizens deserving of their freedom.

Their sacrifices should not be ignored, but international laws should be implemented to ensure their rights in Gaza.

The war in Gaza can only end when international powers support the real rights of the Palestinians, condemn Israel's aggressive policy, and work towards a permanent solution to the crisis.

It is time that the international humanitarian organizations in the Islamic World should adopt practical measures and exert widespread political and economic pressure on Israel to put an end to this bloody war.

Sayed Sharif

Strengthening border security ensures stability & independence for the country

Countries are independent and secure when their borders are secure.

If the borders are open and anyone can come and go without permission, then not only internal security is at risk, but also the ground is paved for foreign interference, smuggling, and intelligence activities. Afghanistan, which has always been struggling with the problems of foreign conspiracies, intelligence games and illegal movement, has now paid special attention to protecting its borders under the rule of the Islamic Emirate.

The stability of a country is not only maintained by just maintaining internal order, but border security also plays a fundamental role in it.

If the borders are open and anyone can come and go without permission, then this not only causes security problems but also poses a threat to the independence of the country.

Now, nobody can cross the border under the pretext of any mistake, nor can smugglers easily go for their work.

Besides, no foreign intelligence can misuse our country's borders.

The Islamic Emirate has not only provided all necessary equipment for border forces to protect the country's borders but has also increased its sense of responsibility in the protection of the country's borders.

The Islamic Emirate has realized that border security is vital for national stability, economic growth, and political independence.

Therefore, it has equipped the country's border forces, adopted strong measures, and focused seriously on preventing illegal activities.

Now, Afghanistan's borders are open only to those with legal documents, and any suspicious movement is monitored closely.

With the re-establishment of the Islamic Emirate, Afghanistan is moving towards complete control and security of its borders. In the Islamic Emirate, strengthening border security has become a top priority as necessary steps have been taken to protect the country's national sovereignty.

As a result of these measures, Afghanistan has taken the necessary measures to achieve complete security of its borders.

Afghanistan has well-equipped border security forces, with a strong defense system established to fully protect its borders.

The country's border forces carry out special operations to prevent terrorism, smuggling, and all kinds of illegal activities, and they play an important role in ensuring security in all regions of the country.

During these operations, very serious steps have been taken for peace and security in all borders of Afghanistan, which is vital for the country's national stability, development, and security of the people.

The Islamic Emirate has also pledged not to allow anyone to carry out any activity against another country from the territory or borders of Afghanistan, and in implementing this commitment, it has respected international laws and principles.

The Islamic Emirate has taken actions in accordance with international laws and principles to protect its borders.

These actions are not only vital for protecting Afghanistan's national sovereignty but also play an important role in Afghanistan's independence and the country's economic and social development. The protection of Afghanistan's borders is carried out in the light of international laws, in which special importance is also given to cooperation with Afghanistan's neighboring countries. **Fida Mohammad**

Effective ways to prevent obesity and maintain a healthy lifestyle

Obesity has become a global health concern, affecting millions of people and increasing the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is crucial for preventing obesity and ensuring long-term well-being. Every year, March 4th is observed as World Obesity Day, dedicated to raising awareness about the causes, risks, and prevention of obesity.

One of the main triggers of unhealthy weight gain is stress. Many people turn to comfort foods when they feel stressed, leading to overeating and poor food choices.

Emotional eating can cause the body to store excess fat, resulting in obesity over time.

To prevent this, individuals should focus on managing stress through healthy coping mechanisms such as meditation, deep breathing, physical exercise, or engaging in hobbies that bring relaxation.

Reducing stress levels not only helps in controlling weight but also improves overall mental and physical health.

Sleep plays a vital role in weight management. Studies have shown that people who do not get enough sleep tend to gain weight more easily.

Sleep deprivation affects the body's hormonal balance, increasing appetite and cravings for high-calorie, sugary foods.

Getting enough quality sleep is recommended to regulate metabolism, control hunger, and maintain overall health. A well-rested body functions efficiently, reducing the risk of obesity.

One of the biggest contributors to obesity is the overconsumption of junk food and processed meals.

Fast food, sugary snacks, and fried foods contain high levels of unhealthy fats, sugar, and empty calories, leading to excessive weight gain.

Instead of relying on unhealthy food choices, individuals should focus on preparing home-cooked meals with fresh ingredients.

Eating nutrient-dense foods ensures the body receives essential vitamins and minerals without unnecessary calories.

Physical activity is crucial for burning calories and maintaining a healthy weight.

A sedentary lifestyle leads to weight gain and increases the risk of obesity-related diseases. Engaging in regular exercise, such as walking, running, swimming, or strength training, helps burn fat, build muscle, and improve overall fitness.

Increasing physical activity levels is essential to keeping the body in shape and preventing obesity. Even simple habits like taking the stairs instead of the elevator or walking instead of driving short distances can make a significant difference.

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables is one of the most effective ways to prevent obesity.

These foods are high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, which aid digestion and keep people feeling full longer.

Unlike processed foods, fruits and vegetables have fewer calories and provide essential nutrients that promote good health.

Individuals should increase their intake of fresh produce to support weight management and overall well-being.

Certain lifestyle habits contribute significantly to weight gain.

Smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, late-night eating, and irregular meal patterns can disrupt the body's metabolism and lead to obesity.

It is important to break these habits and adopt a disciplined routine that includes balanced meals at regular intervals.

By making small yet effective lifestyle changes, individuals can prevent obesity and enhance their quality of life.

Drinking enough water is essential for digestion, metabolism, and appetite control.

Many people mistake thirst for hunger, leading to unnecessary snacking and overeating.

Staying hydrated helps curb cravings, flush out toxins, and support overall body functions.

Doctors encourage individuals to drink plenty of water throughout the day to maintain good health and prevent unnecessary weight gain.

One of the major reasons for overeating is distracted eating.

When people eat while watching television or using their phones, they tend to consume more food than necessary because they are not paying attention to portion sizes. This mindless eating leads to weight gain over time.

Avoiding distractions during meals and practicing mindful eating habits can help individuals control their food intake and develop healthier eating patterns.

Preventing obesity is not about following strict diets or engaging in extreme workouts; rather, it is about making sustainable lifestyle changes that promote health and well-being.

By managing stress, getting enough sleep, avoiding junk food, staying physically active, eating nutritious foods, breaking bad habits, staying hydrated, and practicing mindful eating, individuals can significantly reduce their risk of obesity.

On March 4th, World Obesity Day, organizations and individuals worldwide come together to spread awareness about obesity prevention. These valuable guidelines can help individuals maintain a healthy weight and avoid the complications associated with obesity.

Small yet consistent efforts in improving daily habits can make a big difference in achieving a healthier and happier life. By adopting these practical steps, everyone can work towards a fitter and disease-free future. **Mukhtar Safi**



MoU signed to provide hundreds of needy families with assistance in Kabul, Ghor



KABUL: The Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority said Wednesday in a statement that it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) worth $694,428 with the ActionAid Organization to provide hundreds of poor families with assistance in Kabul and Ghor provinces.

The MoU was signed by Mullah Nooruddin Turabi, the head of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority and Srikanta Misra, the head of ActionAid, the statement said.

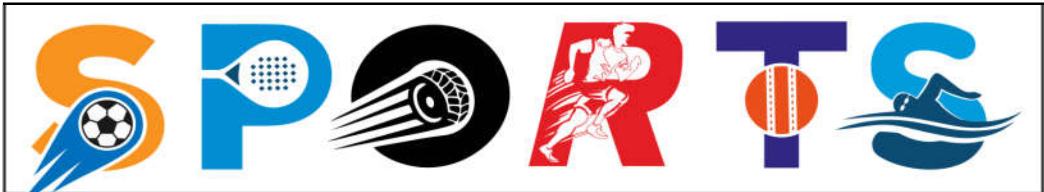
"The organization will distribute winter assistance to more than 1,740 deserving families in the two provinces," said the statement.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Mullah Turabi said that addressing the challenges of the most vulnerable segments of society is one of his led authority's priorities, therefore, the ANDMA has been committed to providing the deserving people with essential assistance nationwide.

The authority has so far signed dozens of MoUs to provide deserving families with essential assistance across the country. The Kabul Times

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USD	GBP	INR	PKR	EUR	IRR	AED
01	01	1000	1000	01	1000	01
AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN
72.90	93.31	837	252	77.52	01.32	19.85



Afghan cricket star Azmatullah Omarzai becomes world's No.1 ODI all-rounder

Afghanistan's rising star Azmatullah Omarzai has achieved a historic milestone by becoming the world's top-ranked ODI all-rounder, according to the latest ICC rankings.

The 24-year-old delivered a stellar performance in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, securing a five-wicket haul against England and scoring a vital fifty against Australia. His exceptional form has propelled him to the No.1 spot with 296 rating points, surpassing his fellow Afghan cricketer Mohammad Nabi, who now sits in second place.

Omarzai's rise in the rankings highlights Afghanistan's growing dominance in international cricket. He also made notable progress in the ODI batting rankings, climbing 12 spots to 24th after scoring 126 runs during the tournament.

Another Afghan star, Ibrahim Zadran, also made headlines after scoring 177 runs



against England in Lahore, which pushed him 13 places up to 10th in the batting rankings with 676 rating points. Meanwhile, India's Shubman Gill retained his No.1 spot among batters, while Virat Kohli moved up to fourth following his match-winning performance against Australia in the semi-final.

In the ODI bowling rankings, New Zealand's Matt Henry climbed three spots to third, joining Sri Lanka's Maheesh Theekshana (1st) and South Africa's Keshav Maharaj (2nd) at the top. Indian pacer Mohammed Shami also made a comeback, moving three places up to 11th.

With Afghanistan's key players making remarkable progress, the team continues to prove itself as a formidable force in international cricket. Omarzai's achievement as the world's best all-rounder is a testament to the country's rising cricketing standards and the growing influence of Afghan players on the global stage.

The Kabul Times

Afghan stars set to shine in Brazil's Four-Nation Futsal Tournament



Afghanistan's national futsal team has left Tehran for São Paulo and Curitiba, Brazil, to participate in the Four-Nation Futsal Tournament. The tournament will feature teams from Afghanistan, host nations Brazil, Greenland, and Iran.

Additionally, five Afghan players—Akbar Kazemi, Reza Hosseinpour, Hamid Reza Hosseini, Hossein Mohammadi, and Sayed Mojtaba Hosseini—are set to depart from Mashhad, Iran, to join the team in Brazil.

This tournament presents a valuable opportunity for Afghanistan to compete against some of the strongest futsal teams in the world. Brazil, known for its dominance in futsal, will be a tough contender, while Iran, one of Asia's top futsal teams, adds another competitive challenge. Greenland, though less well-known in international futsal, will also be looking to make an impact in the competition.

Afghanistan's futsal team has gained recognition in recent years, showing remarkable progress in regional and international tournaments. Their participation in this prestigious tournament reflects the country's growing presence in the sport.

The Four-Nation Tournament will serve as an important platform for the Afghan squad to test their skills, gain international experience, and strengthen their team chemistry. It will also provide an opportunity for Afghan players to showcase their talent on a global stage. As the team embarks on this journey, fans and supporters eagerly await their performance in Brazil, hoping for a strong showing against top futsal teams.

The Kabul Times

India defeats Australia to reach final of Champions Trophy

India's national cricket team secured a spot in the final of the Champions Trophy after a six-wicket victory over Australia in the semifinal match. The thrilling encounter took place at the Dubai International Stadium.

Chasing a target of 265 runs, India successfully reached 267/6 in 48.1 overs, sealing the win with 11 balls to spare. Star batsman Virat Kohli played a crucial role, scoring 84 runs, while KL Rahul remained unbeaten on 42 to guide India to victory. Shreyas Iyer (45) and Axar Patel (27) also made valuable contributions to the team's successful chase.

India faced an early setback when Rohit Sharma (28) and Shubman Gill (8) were dismissed quickly. However, Kohli anchored the innings with a calculated approach, forming key partnerships with Shreyas Iyer and KL Rahul to keep India on track.

Hardik Pandya (28 off 24 balls) provided late acceleration, ensuring India maintained control in the final overs. Eventually, Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja completed the chase without further trouble.

For Australia, Nathan Ellis (2/49) and Adam Zampa (2/60) delivered strong performances with the ball. Ben Dwarshuis and Cooper Connolly also chipped in with one wicket each.

With this victory, India now advances to the final, where they will aim to lift the prestigious Champions Trophy. The team's well-balanced performance, particularly in batting, has boosted their confidence ahead of the title clash. Fans eagerly anticipate an exciting final as India prepares to take on their next challenge.

The Kabul Times

Indonesia uses cloud seeding to stop heavy rains as floods hit Jakarta



Indonesian authorities are using cloud seeding to mitigate heavy rainfall that has caused severe flooding in the capital, Jakarta, and its surrounding areas, killing at least one person and displacing thousands.

The deluge, which began on Monday, has affected Jakarta, home to about 11 million people, along with the neighbouring cities of Bogor, Bekasi, and Tangerang.

Authorities said the rains could persist until March 11 and have taken preemptive measures to reduce further damage.

At least 2,200 people have been displaced, with some seeking safety on rooftops or using ropes to wade through the rising waters.

Cloud seeding, a technique that involves releasing salt or other chemicals into clouds to trigger rain, aims to steer rainfall away from flood-hit areas or limit the formation of heavier downpours.

The operation is expected to continue until Saturday, focusing on mountainous areas in West Java province, where rainfall often flows into the capital.

"We can't prevent the rain, that's impossible, but we can reduce the intensity," Dwikorita Karnawati, head of Indonesia's weather agency, told reporters on Tuesday. "We can't let the clouds get too big, so we will make it come down little by little."

Rescue teams have deployed rubber boats and relief supplies to the worst-hit areas, evacuating residents or assisting those reluctant to leave their homes.

Jakarta, a low-lying city, is prone to flooding during the wet season, which lasts from November to March. In 2020, torrential rains triggered devastating floods and landslides in the region, killing nearly 70 people and displacing thousands.

Aljazeera

Germany's Merz promises to do 'whatever it takes' on defence

Friedrich Merz, who's expected to become Germany's next chancellor, has announced a political deal to raise hundreds of billions of euros in extra spending on defence and infrastructure.

"In view of the threats to our freedom and peace on our continent, the rule for our defence now has to be 'whatever it takes'," he said.

Merz, whose conservatives won Germany's election last month, said he and his likely coalition partners from the centre left would put new proposals to parliament next week.

He has spoken of a need for urgency on German spending in light of "recent decisions by the American government".

Merz, 69, did not elaborate but he has been outspoken in his criticism of President Donald Trump's treatment of Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky in the Oval Office.

Earlier this week he said European leaders had to show "we are in a position to act independently in Europe".

At a news conference on Tuesday, alongside leaders from the Social Democrats and his conservative sister party in Bavaria, Merz said Germany was counting on the US to stand by "mutual alliance commitments... but we also know that the resources for our national and alliance defence must now be significantly expanded".

Merz said, in English, he would do "whatever it takes" to protect freedom and peace - a reference to Mario Draghi's vow to save the euro in 2012 when he was European Central Bank president.

At the heart of his proposals is a special €500bn (£415bn) fund to repair Germany's creaking infrastructure, as well as loosening stringent budget rules to allow investment in defence.

In the wake of Europe's financial crisis, Germany imposed a "debt brake" or Schuldenbremse, limiting the budget deficit to 0.35% of national economic output (GDP) in normal times.

The new defence proposal recommends that "necessary defence spending" above 1% of GDP should be exempt from debt brake restrictions, with no upper limit.

Although Germany has provided more aid to Ukraine than any other European country, its military is notoriously underfunded.

Olaf Scholz's Social Democrat-led government set up a €100bn fund after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, but most of that has already been allocated.

Germany will have to find an extra €30bn a year just to meet the current Nato target of 2% of GDP on defence, and security experts believe it will need to raise its target closer to 3%. **BBC**

France trying to re-establish link between US and Ukraine, government spokeswoman says

France is working on re-establishing the link between the United States and Ukraine so that a "lasting and robust peace" can be obtained, government spokeswoman Sophie Primas said on Wednesday.

"We have proposed a truce. That is what is being studied within the negotiations with the United States. France and Europe are trying to reestablish a link between the United States and Ukraine," Primas told LCI television.

President Emmanuel Macron has said France and Britain are proposing a partial one-month truce between Russia and Ukraine as part of European diplomacy efforts designed to shore up Western support for Ukraine following an acrimonious meeting between President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and US President Donald Trump in the Oval Office last Friday. **Alarabiya**

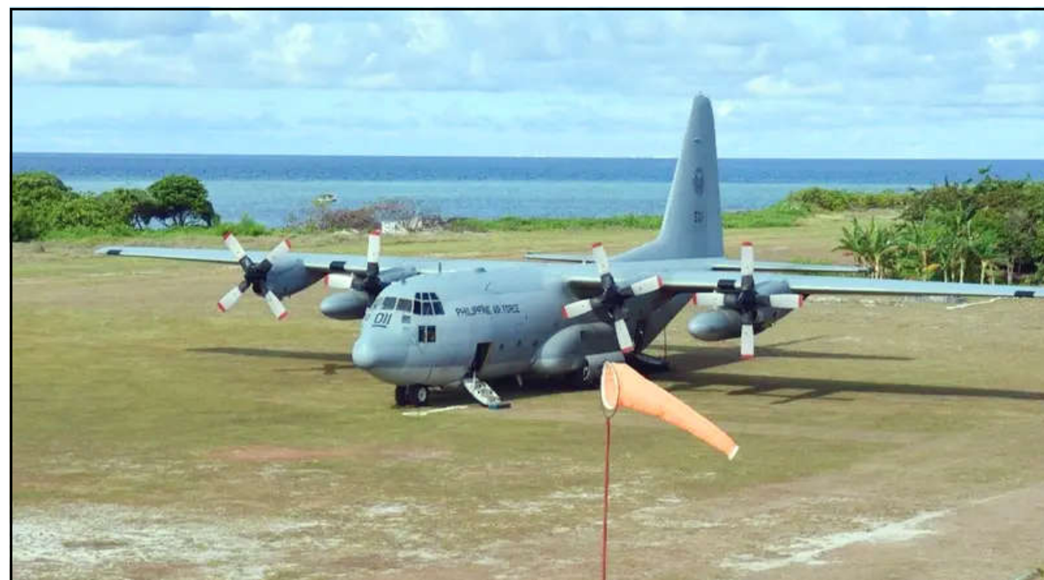
Two Philippine air force pilots killed in crash

Two Philippine air force pilots were killed after their aircraft crashed during an anti-insurgency mission in a southern province, military officials said on Wednesday.

It was not immediately clear when the accident occurred but the Philippine Air Force said the FA-50 fighter lost contact with other aircraft involved in the mission in Bukidnon province shortly after midnight on March 4, prompting a search-and-rescue operation.

The wreckage of the jet fighter, and the two pilots, were found in the Kalatungan mountains in the southern Mindanao region on Wednesday, military officials said.

"The wreckage points to it being a crash," Air Force spokesperson Consuelo Castillo told reporters in a virtual briefing, adding an investigation is underway to determine the cause of the accident.



The remaining 11 South Korean-built FA-50 jets have been grounded following the accident, Castillo added.

The Philippines acquired 12 FA-50s from South Korea in 2014 as part of a military modernization program to boost internal security and improve its capability to defend its maritime borders against China in the South China Sea. "Our intention is to put them back out of grounding immediately to not disrupt our operations too much," Castillo said.

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